

## Workshop 2

### Strategic productivity - turning a narrative into



Funded by  
UK Government

Delivered by



**Professor Bart van Ark**  
Professor of Productivity Studies, Alliance Manchester  
Business School and Managing Director at The Productivity  
Institute



# STRATEGIC PRODUCTIVITY – TURNING A NARRATIVE INTO ACTION

Bart van Ark

The Productivity Institute & University of Manchester

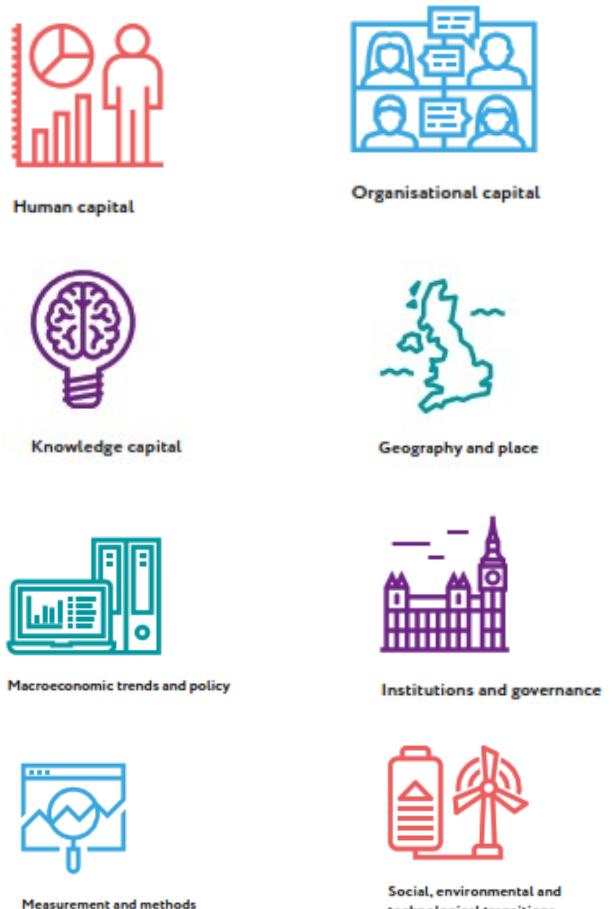
Help to Grow, Alumni Network Annual Conference  
February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2026

# The Productivity Institute

<https://www.productivity.ac.uk/>



**Lay the foundations for an era of *sustained and inclusive productivity growth* and help *policy makers and business leaders* across the UK understand how to *improve productivity and raise living standards***



# WHAT IS PRODUCTIVITY ABOUT?



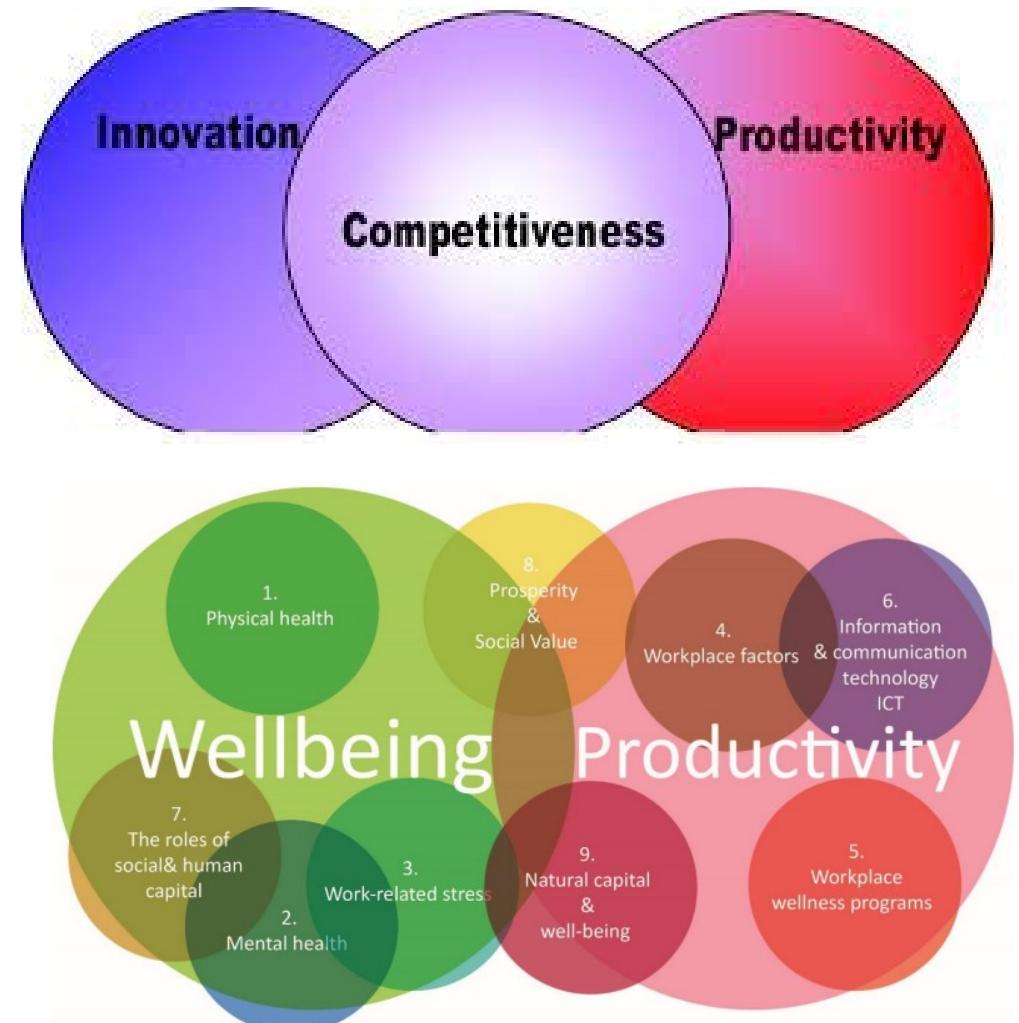
<https://www.menti.com/>  
code 8850 3885

Perceptions of productivity (positive and negative)

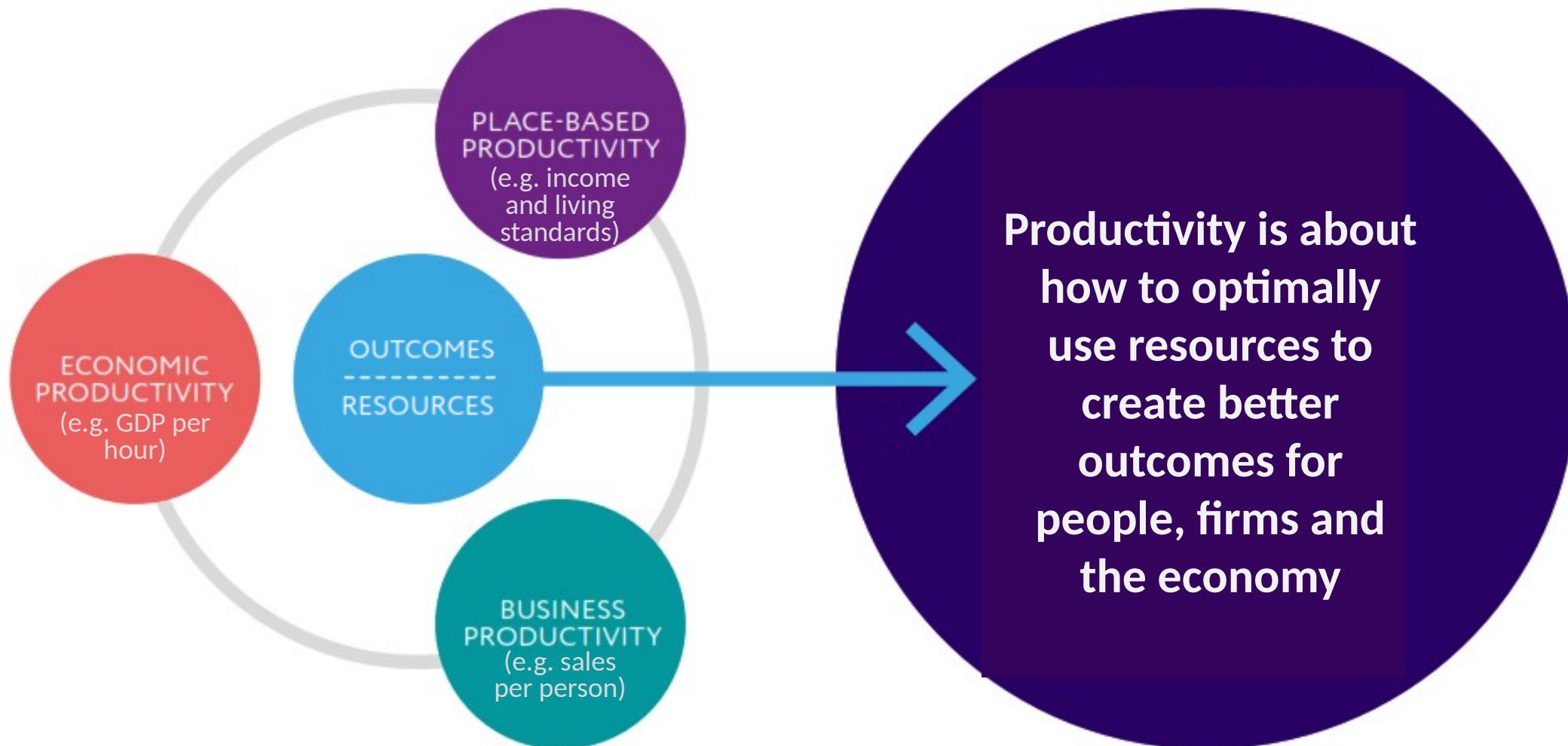
leader bold focus  
creative fast transpiration  
inspiration

# WHY PRODUCTIVITY MATTERS

- Drives long-term growth
- Creates resources to invest
- Makes firms grow faster
- Create jobs that fetch higher wages
- Make people more innovative
- Make people healthier and more engaged
- Creates better outcomes for others: people, firms and places



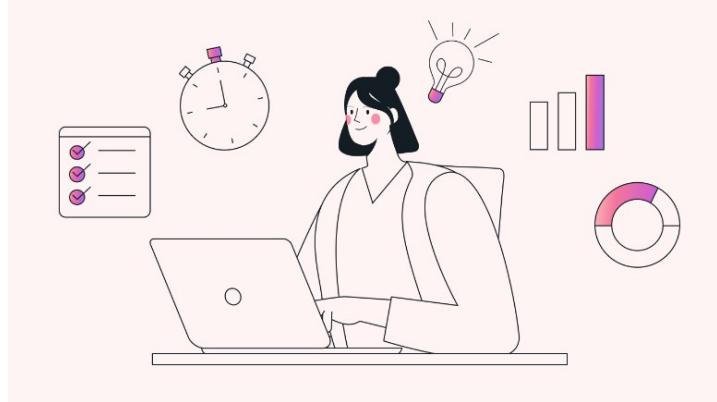
# PRODUCTIVITY CREATES BETTER OUTCOMES FOR PEOPLE, FIRMS AND THE ECONOMY



# PRODUCTIVITY, EFFICIENCY OR BOTH?

## Efficiency

- Task & efficiency oriented
- Monetary (sales/cost) or piece rate (quantity/unit)
- Focus on “doing more with less” (e.g. less time or fewer resources)



## Productivity

- Business & effectiveness oriented
- “Real” measure, adjusted for inflation (firm output/input)
- Focus on how “creating better outcomes” by better combining limited resources



Efficiency and Productivity: You Need Both to Drive Success



# THE KEY DRIVERS OF PRODUCTIVITY



# FIVE AREAS OF PRIORITY FOR STRATEGIC PRODUCTIVITY

- Finance for Investment
- Strategic Cost Management
- Valuing Intangible Assets
- Customer relationships
- Data Analytics
- Collaboration and Communication



- R&D and New Technologies
- Digital Transformation
- Knowledge Diffusion
- Worker Skills and Training
- Engagement and Well-Being
- Agility and Adaptability
- Inclusive Leadership
- Managing Outcomes
- Flexible Teams

Source: The Productivity Institute

# TERA ALLAS



- Senior Advisor, McKinsey & Company
- Honorary Professor at Alliance Manchester Business School
- Chair of The Productivity Institute's Advisory Committee
- Trustee of Be the Business
- Co-Chair of the NHS Productivity Commission, The Health Foundation
- Governor of the National Institute of Economic and Social Research

Formerly:

- Chief Economist roles at the UK's energy, transport, and business departments
- Director General for Strategy, Analysis, and Better Regulation
- Deputy Head of the UK Government Economic Service.

# CONVERSATION ON BUSINESS PRODUCTIVITY DRIVERS BETWEEN TERA ALLES AND BART VAN ARK



# TABLE ASSIGNMENT: *DISCUSS KEY ACTIONS FOR ONE OF THE FIVE KEY DRIVERS ... AND SEND UP TO 10 INSIGHTS TO ...*



- Innovation and Digital: [menti.com 4105 5495](https://menti.com/41055495)
- Worker Skills and Well-Being: [menti.com 6914 5254](https://menti.com/69145254)
- Leadership and Management: [menti.com 8933 3338](https://menti.com/89333338)
- Marketing and Communication: [menti.com 6824 3633](https://menti.com/68243633)
- Mobilising and Finance: [menti.com 4850 3741](https://menti.com/48503741)

1. YOU NEED A PRODUCTIVITY NARRATIVE
  - *What? Why? How?*
2. THERE IS NO SILVER BULLET TO PRODUCTIVITY IMPROVEMENT
  - *The art of productivity is to find the optimal mix of productivity drivers*
3. THERE IS NO SINGLE SHOOTER TO FIRE THE PRODUCTIVITY BULLETS
  - Productivity is a highly collaborative effort
4. DO NOT CHANGE EVERYTHING AT ONCE
  - Productivity is a process of continuous improvement in a disciplined way

# Strategic Productivity at the Alliance Manchester Business School – 4 Day Course



## What is this course?

- 4-day course at Alliance Manchester Business School, **4 - 7 Nov 2025**
- Uses a Strategic Productivity Framework developed by The Productivity Institute
- Covers five core productivity pillars: innovation, skills and wellbeing, leadership, finance, marketing and communication

experts on productivity

## Learning, application and outcomes

- Mix of theory, live project work, company visits and peer exchange
- Gains: strategic mindset, actionable productivity levers, stronger competitive performance, network of peers

resources and materials for 12 months post-course.

## Who should attend and why?

- Senior leaders, executives, decision-makers
- Ideal for CEOs, MDs, operations heads, finance leads and transformation leads who want strategy, performance

**UPCOMING COURSE DATES: 2-5 June 2026, 2-5 February 2026, 6-9 July 2027**

Lectures from 10:00

Access to digital





<https://www.productivity.ac.uk/>